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PROBLEMS

Is it desirable to surface an A-12/AF-12 type vehicle prior to an incident which will force the Government to acknowledge that aircraft?

Should any controlled surfacing acknowledge the participation of CIA in the Program?

How to surface?

GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Within the next year the A/AF-12 Program will in one form or another be exposed to public knowledge either by

- a. Inadvertent disclosure
- b. Willful security leak
- c. Test flight/training mishap or accident
- d. Publicized by technical press and/or aircraft industry
- e. Operational employment followed by diplomatic protest
- f. Sheer magnitude of program
- g. Production of R-12 aircraft and their deployment outside

of

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2. It is to the advantage of the Government to surface the Program under circumstances and conditions of its own choosing rather than be forced to acknowledge the aircraft following an uncontrolled revelation.

3. A surfacing of any sort, controlled or uncontrolled, will necessitate Government acknowledgement and comment.

4. Surfacing of any sort will disclose contractors involved and raise questions as to secret development.

FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION:

FOR SURFACING:

1. Knowledgeability and speculation throughout industry and technical press may well cause uncontrolled surfacing.
2. Immensity of program may cause revelation through other uncontrolled means.
3. Selection of the time and circumstances for release as well as psychological advantage inherent in a voluntary surfacing.
4. Precedent established with surfacing of U-2 Program following the 1 May 1960 incident, yet Program has been continued with same effective security.
5. Make certain A-12 fabrication and tests data available to all SST contractors.

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FOR SURFACING AND ADMITTING CIA PARTICIPATION:

1. The mention of Lockheed and methodology employed in the aircraft development will draw a comparison to the U-2 Program and speculation of CIA's involvement and possible true purpose of the present program. Realistically it must be conceded that technical people in the aircraft industry as well as the technical press are aware of the true elements and have refrained from comment in National interest. Any release short of admitting CIA participation may be interpreted by them as an attempted deception and may relieve them from their voluntary censorship and invite all-out reporting, which will inevitably result in the CIA being involved.

2. By reference to the involvement of the CIA in the initial undertaking, the U.S. Government will be in a better position to maintain the veil of secrecy around methods employed in the development of the aircraft through legal CIA security prerogatives.

3. By use of this release, we cannot be accused later of attempting to hide CIA participation to avoid normal controls (i. e., Air Force using CIA contracting privileges).

4. Provides a legal explanation for procurement methods.

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5. Provides more lead time by surfacing a non-AR model first.
6. Takes advantage of present favorable public opinion environment as to reconnaissance.
7. No CIA affiliation story:
  - a. Will give rise to more questions than it answers.
  - b. Will raise question of procurement practices that cannot be answered.
  - c. If CIA participation is eventually revealed it may cause embarrassment to Government release.

AGAINST SURFACING:

1. Any release will confirm to Russians existence of aircraft and may hasten their defensive measures to counter it.
2. Continued hold down may permit our reaching operational capability without disclosure.
3. Public release may trigger avalanche of questions which security will dictate against answering and thereby create hostile press and public reaction.

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AGAINST INCLUSION OF CIA IN A SURFACING:

1. Such admission of CIA participation would be a departure from a basic tenet of Intelligence philosophy and could well result in widespread criticism in this country and abroad.
2. A surfacing which will exclude mention of CIA yet form a credible story based on some but not all of the facts, if accepted by press and public, will facilitate cover for continued A-12 activity.
3. Preclude criticism of CIA involvement in such operations and would eliminate Soviet opportunities for propaganda against CIA motives.
4. Official admission of CIA involvement may result in:
  - a. Compromising of deception techniques utilized in industry to disguise the true nature and purpose of work performed (in house cover stories).
  - b. Compromising of methods and techniques used by CIA in "black" contracting and maintaining industrial and operational security.
  - c. Giving the R-12 a CIA taint that might be extremely difficult to purge from the R-12 aircraft and its utilization possibly putting it in the notorious U-2 category.

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- d. Possibly compromising the cover of CIA staff and contract personnel associated with the security (investigative) aspects of the program.
- e. Provoking Soviet propaganda.
- f. Inviting certain Congressional and editorial criticisms on scope of CIA activities.
- g. Suggesting probability of future covert operations.
- h. Exposing other exotic CIA developments.
- i. Compromising true mission of AFIGO-S (Col. Geary's office) and special units at Wright Patterson AFB.
- j. Destroying cover story of CIA pilots.

RECOMMENDATION:

Surface the AF-12 as soon as possible admitting CIA participation in early development.

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PLAN OF ACTION:

1. Coordinate text and timing of release with:
  - a. CIA
  - b. NRO, Air Force, DOD, State (Cover Committee)
  - c. FIAB and Special Group
  - d. President
2. Advise key members of Congress.
3. Advise key industry officials.
4. Advise certain members of technical press.
5. Once decision made to surface discreetly reaffirm security procedures with contractors and Government agencies.
6. Prior to release ask FAA to postpone deadline for SST proposals in order permit contractors review data which LAC can release on A-12 fabrication and flight tests experience.
7. Fly AF-12 aircraft to Edwards and make release.

PRESS RELEASE

The long-range interceptor (LRI) is an outgrowth of the follow-on to the U-2 started in 1959 under a joint CIA/USAF Program. Since the proposal represented substantial progress in aircraft state-of-the-art development, as well as the potential of providing the Air Force with a multi-purpose Mach 3 aircraft, the Program was reviewed by the present Administration with the cognizance and concurrence of certain members of Congress and the decision was made to continue its development.

The prototype was first flown in the summer of 1963



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Advanced testing is scheduled to be conducted at Edwards Air Force Base, California



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It is

anticipated that a reconnaissance version and possibly a reconnaissance-strike model of this aircraft will be available for flight test during 1965.

The Air Force for the first time in its history now finds itself in the singular position of having a vehicle whose basic design lends itself to a diversity of purpose with only minor modifications and with little change in performance. The aircraft was designed by Clarence L. (Kelly) Johnson of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and is powered by two Pratt and Whitney J-58 engines. Data from this Program will be made



available to U.S. aircraft companies for use in preparing proposals for the Supersonic Transport (SST), however, the detailed specifications of this aircraft, as well as information relative to its development, flight tests and numbers will continue under appropriate Department of Defense security restrictions.